



**2013 session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference
of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons**

**Statement by Ambassador Peter Woolcott
Australian Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Geneva
and Ambassador for Disarmament
22 April 2013**

Mr Chairman,

May I again congratulate you on your election as Chairman of this second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference. I look forward to working with you and wish to assure you of my support and that of my delegation.

Mr Chairman,

The NPT is the centrepiece of international efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, make progress in reducing existing nuclear arsenals and ultimately realise the goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

The consensus Action Plan of the 2010 NPT RevCon provides concrete steps to take us further towards these shared goals. But implementation is the key. So Australia urges all States to maintain a collective focus on the Action Plan and to keep striving for its implementation, as we build to the 2015 RevCon. This is a shared responsibility for us all.

Mr Chairman,

Australia is proud to partner with the nine other NPT non-nuclear-weapon States in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI) as part of our efforts to support effective implementation.

The NPDI has submitted seven working papers to this PrepCom session, reflecting our key priorities: reducing the role of nuclear weapons; non-strategic nuclear weapons; CTBT; export controls; negative security assurances and nuclear-weapon-free zones; disarmament education; and the wider application of safeguards.

Australia is also pleased to join our fellow members of the longstanding Vienna Group of Ten, in submitting working papers on a range of key technical issues.

We hope these working papers stimulate discussion and provide new ideas that support the implementation of the 2010 RevCon consensus outcome and help lay the groundwork for the 2015 RevCon.

Mr Chairman,

Australia welcomes the continued engagement of the nuclear-weapon States towards implementation of their disarmament commitments made or reaffirmed in 2010. We look forward to hearing their contributions to this PrepCom session.

However, expectations are growing. Australia believes that nuclear-weapon States and all other States possessing nuclear weapons need to do more to reduce and ultimately eliminate all types of nuclear weapons, deployed and non-deployed, in an irreversible, transparent and verifiable way. In the meantime, they need to reduce the role and significance of nuclear weapons in declaratory policies.

Together with our NPDI partners, Australia continues to encourage the nuclear-weapon States to agree on a standard nuclear disarmament reporting form consistent with Action 21. The draft form developed by the NPDI in 2011 was intended to aid nuclear-weapon States' discussions in this regard and ultimately their reporting. Greater transparency from the nuclear-weapons States will help create conditions more conducive to further progress in disarmament.

Mr Chairman,

Australia continues to be deeply disappointed by the failure – there is no other word for it – of the Conference on Disarmament to do the work assigned to it, including by the NPT membership. The failure to commence negotiations on the long-overdue Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty – which would ban the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices – is particularly notable. An FMCT is an essential step for the elimination of nuclear weapons and remains a key Australian priority. Pending negotiations, all States possessing nuclear weapons should declare and maintain a moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.

The CD's failure continues to call into question its role and threatens its very future as a forum for negotiation. At its 67th session in 2012, the General Assembly made its concerns clear by adopting two key resolutions: resolution 67/53, establishing a group of governmental experts to make recommendations on possible aspects of a FMCT; and resolution 67/56, establishing an open-ended working group on taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations.

Australia supported both resolutions and intends this year to participate in the open-ended working group, along with the preparatory work for the group of governmental experts. This is with a view to helping take the 2010 RevCon agenda forward and bring fresh impetus to the work the CD should be doing and can still do.

Mr Chairman,

Australia welcomes the recent ratification of the CTBT by Chad and Brunei Darussalam. But we are deeply disappointed that the world is still awaiting the CTBT's entry into force. Entry into force is a major Australian priority, and Australia, together with the other NPDI member states, again urges all remaining Annex 2 States to ratify the treaty without delay and without waiting for other States to ratify the Treaty. Pending entry into force, all States possessing nuclear weapons should maintain or implement a moratorium on testing.

Mr Chairman,

Australia remains deeply concerned by the risk for humanity represented by the possibility that nuclear weapons could be used and the catastrophic humanitarian consequences that would result from their use. The discussions at the Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons in Oslo this year, in which Australia participated, illustrated once more the devastating immediate and long-term humanitarian effects of a nuclear weapon detonation. This is why we strive to realise the goal of a world without nuclear weapons, including through implementation of the 2010 Action Plan. Australia welcomes the offer of Mexico to convene a follow-up conference on this issue.

Mr Chairman,

Australia reaffirms the right of countries to access nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. However, effective safeguards must underpin this access to address the proliferation risks inherent in the spread of nuclear technology. As part of the NPDI, Australia continues to advocate for States to adopt the Additional Protocol to the IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement. We have conducted outreach to a number of States yet to conclude an Additional Protocol and stand ready to respond to requests for assistance from States implementing an Additional Protocol.

Mr Chairman,

Australia regrets that a conference on the establishment of a Middle-East Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone has not yet been convened. We strongly support its earliest possible convening. As a long-standing supporter of nuclear-weapon-free zones, Australia fully supports the Facilitator, Ambassador Jaakko Laajava of Finland. We look forward to his report to this PrepCom session and we call upon all States in the region to engage in a spirit of genuine and constructive cooperation on this important goal.

Mr Chairman,

Australia is deeply troubled by the recent actions of the DPRK. Australia condemns the DPRK's third nuclear test on 12 February and its rocket launch on 12 December last year which violated UN Security Council Resolutions 1718, 1874 and (in the case of the 12 February test) 2087. These acts challenge the disarmament and non-proliferation regime. The test again contravenes the international norm that has already been established by the CTBT. No State Party should be silent on this matter

– we should all be speaking with one voice. Australia calls on the DPRK to abandon its current path, cease its provocations and abide by its international commitments, including UN Security Council Resolutions.

Australia continues to be seriously concerned about Iran's lack of cooperation with the international community in respect of its nuclear program, as well as its failure to abide by UN Security Council resolutions and its IAEA safeguards obligations. We call on Iran to cooperate fully and unconditionally with the IAEA, and engage with the international community to establish confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear program.

Mr Chairman,

I should like to draw the delegations' attention to the report "Nuclear Weapons: The State of Play", launched by Professor Gareth Evans and the Australian National University's Centre for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament during this PrepCom session. This current report builds on the excellent work of the Australia-Japan-sponsored International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament in 2009. While this report does not necessarily reflect Australian Government policies and positions, we consider it to be an important contribution to international exchange and dialogue on these crucial issues, most particularly because it focuses squarely on the state of implementation of the commitments we have made, notably the 2010 Action Plan. It sheds important light on what we still need to do.

Mr Chairman,

We look forward to working with you during this meeting. We hope to maintain the momentum in implementing the Action Plan, as we start to look further ahead to 2015 when we will need to decide on next steps towards our shared goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

I thank you, Mr Chairman.